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SUBJECT: Trafficking in Persons and Child Sex Exploitation in the State of Goias

¶1. Summary: The state of Goias, which surrounds Brasilia, has one of the highest incidences of human trafficking in Brazil; it also has a number of officials in the state with a strong commitment to dealing with the problem. In light of impending direct flights between Brasilia and Atlanta, which along with facilitating legitimate travel to the United States also open up new opportunities for traffickers, and in the wake of a successful seminar on the subject of trafficking in the state capital of Goiania, the U.S. Mission is looking into how the USG might enhance cooperation to stop human trafficking in the state. End summary.

#### Seminar

¶2. On November 18, the Public Ministry (Prosecutor's Office) of the state of Goias, in partnership with the Supreme Court of Goias, Association of Children's Advocates of Goias, Federal Senate and the U.S. Mission in Brazil, held a day-long seminar on "Confronting Trafficking in Persons and the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents." Members of all the sponsoring organizations spoke, including from the U.S. Mission Charge d'Affaires Lisa Kubiske, an official of the Department of Homeland Security/Immigration and Customs Enforcement (DHS/ICE) and the fraud officer from U.S. Consulate General Rio de Janeiro. About 600 people were in attendance - lawyers, judges, police, teachers, social workers, members of NGOs and representatives of the trucking, taxi and tourism industries.

#### Situation in Goias

¶3. The state of Goias, which surrounds the Federal District in central-western Brazil, has one of the highest incidences of human trafficking in the country. At least four out of five cases of persons trafficked are for the purpose of sexual exploitation, with the remaining fifth for forced labor of other kinds. From 2004 to early 2009, 45 accusations of enticement for trafficking of women were presented to the Federal Public Ministry in Goias. (Trafficking is primarily a federal matter.) During the same period, the Federal Police in Goias conducted 32 joint operations on trafficking of women with police in Spain, Portugal, Switzerland and Italy.

¶4. In December 2008, the state Public Ministry identified 582 "points of prostitution" in Goias, at which 131 cases of child prostitution were discovered. Significantly, almost 90 percent of the prostitutes interviewed had come from other states. Prosecutor Everaldo Sebastiao de Sousa, coordinator of the state Public

Ministry's Youth Support Center, said that police repression succeeds only in moving points of prostitution, not eliminating them.

15. Prosecutor General Eduardo Abdon Moura, head of the state Public Ministry, told seminar participants that law enforcement alone, no matter how effective, cannot stop human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children; it is necessary to create conditions so that trafficked persons have alternatives and are not re-victimized. That requires the coordinated efforts of many governmental and nongovernmental actors, with the strengthening of networks of protection and assistance and establishment of shelters. So far 51 municipalities in the state have created Forums for Combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, and in December 2008, in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Justice, the state Public Ministry set up a Nucleus for Confronting Trafficking in Persons with 40 other institutions and that has a special focus on prevention.

#### Proposals

16. Moura proposed to state court Judge Luiz Claudio Veiga Braga, representing Chief Justice of Goiás Paulo Teles, that the state judiciary create specialized courts for crimes against children and

adolescents to ensure that such cases are handled sensitively, effectively and expeditiously. State court judge Rinaldo Aparecido Barros noted that judges should be "agents of social transformation" to attack the evils/crimes of pedophilia, child pornography, child prostitution, sex tourism and trafficking in persons. He said that one of the biggest problems in dealing with the issue was the silence of the victims, and "the longer a child remains silent, the worse the physical, psychological and behavioral consequences."

17. Barros, as judge, and Bernardo Boclin Borges, as prosecutor, were involved in the most notorious child prostitution case in the state's history - in the town of Niquelandia, 270 kilometers from Brasília, in 2007. According to Borges, the mayor, the mayor's daughter, several municipal officials and local business owners operated a ring in which they exploited children and adolescents as young as 14 years old. Although 13 of some 24 participants in the ring were indicted, 11 for having sex with children, until now none has been convicted. Some of the accused have said in their defense that the children were willing sellers of sex.

18. Federal prosecutor Guilherme Schelb spoke on methods for identifying child victims of physical and sexual abuse, prostitution and trafficking and how to investigate such cases. He noted that these crimes are taking place under the noses of teachers, family members, social workers and police, who should know better. He stressed that drug use and adult prostitution were intimately linked to the problem of sexual exploitation of children.

#### Possible U.S. role

19. In her remarks, Charge Kubiske highlighted the successful U.S.-Brazilian cooperation to eradicate human trafficking and protect children and adolescents. She noted, however, that that success has been partial and that there was scope for much greater cooperation. She urged the seminar participants to consider concrete measures that might now be taken to shut down the

traffickers and the businesses that support them, to better detect international trafficking networks, to better care for victims, offering them alternatives in life, and to prevent re-victimization. She said: "This is not an American problem or a Brazilian problem, but a worldwide problem that affects individuals, families and communities on every continent. Those of us who wish to solve this problem must therefore work across international borders."

¶10. There was a consensus among seminar participants around certain aspects of human trafficking in Goias:

-- There is a need to raise community awareness so that victims, traffickers and sexual predators can be more readily identified.

-- Law enforcement needs better training to rescue victims and arrest traffickers, buyers of child sex and pimps.

-- There must be far greater certainty of punishment in order to reduce the demand for trafficking in persons.

¶11. Over lunch with de Sousa, Barros, Borges and Schelb, poloff asked how coordination with the United States to stop trafficking could be improved. They noted that there already was fruitful collaboration with the Resident Legal Adviser (RLA) (Note: The RLA program has since been shut for lack of USG funding. End note.), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) representative, officials of DHS/ICE and others. There has been discussion, for example, about developing a joint anti-trafficking task force that would focus on "visa turnarounds" who are sent back to Brazil from the U.S. border because of suspicion that they are intending to work as prostitutes. If such persons could be located quickly on their return to Brazil and were willing to cooperate, they could conceivably provide valuable information on human trafficking

rings. Our interlocutors suggested that U.S. Mission officials attend future meetings in Goias of the Nucleus for Confronting Trafficking in Persons.

¶12. Comment: The planned non-stop flights between Brasilia (which has the nearest international airport to Goias) and Atlanta to be operated by Delta Airlines, starting on December 18, while obviously welcome in terms of facilitating legitimate tourism, business and government travel, have also opened up new possibilities for trafficking women and children to and through the United States. The U.S. Mission therefore believes the time is right to increase cooperation to address the serious trafficking problem in the state of Goias.

KUBISKE